

Application Number: 09/879,517

Reply To Office Action of JANUARY 11, 2005**Remarks**

This is filed in response to the Final Office Action mailed January 11, 2005. Applicants submit this amendment that accepts Examiner's suggestions by canceling and amending claims, without prejudice to continue prosecution in a related application, to put this application clearly in condition for allowance. Applicants Claims 1-51 and 66-83 were examined. Claims 14-51 and 66-71 are allowed. The Examiner has indicated Claims 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 73, 74, 78, 80 and 81 contain allowable subject matter. Claims 1, 3, 72 and 74 have been amended. Claims 2 and 73 have been cancelled. Claims 84-86 have been added. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as currently amended comply with Examiner's suggestions and add no new matter, do not present any new issues requiring further consideration or search, and place the application in condition for allowance.

CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 USC § 103

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 72, 75-77, 79, 82 and 83 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US 5,941,867 to Kao (hereinafter Kao) in view of US 6,070,575 to Gonda (hereinafter Gonda).

The Examiner objected to Claim 2 as being dependant upon a rejected base claim (Claim 1), but stated that Claim 2 would be allowable if re-written in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have now amended independent Claim 1 to include all the limitations of Claim 2, which is now cancelled. Claim 3 has also been amended so that Claims 3-13 now depend either directly or indirectly from amended Claim 1, which, in its currently amended form, includes all the limitations of cancelled Claim 2. Consequently Claims 1 and 3-13 are believed allowable.

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The Examiner objected to Claim 73 as being dependant upon a rejected base claim (Claim 72), but stated that Claim 73 would be allowable if re-written in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have now amended independent Claim 72 to include all the limitations of Claim 73, which is now cancelled. Claim 74 has also been amended so that Claims 74-83 now depend either directly or indirectly from amended Claim 72, which, in its currently amended form, includes all the limitations of cancelled Claim 73. Consequently Claims 72 and 74-83 are believed allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments, Applicants believe the rejection based on Kao and Gonda is now moot. Reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1, 4-6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 72, 75-77, 79, 82 and 83 is respectfully requested.

New Claims

Claims 84-86 have been added to the application. The Examiner objected to Claim 10 as being dependant upon a rejected base claim (Claim 1), but stated that Claim 10 would be allowable if re-written in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims (Claim 9). New independent claim 84 has the same elements and structure as previously presented Claim 1, but in addition recites the limitations of original Claims 9 and 10, thus complying with Examiner's suggestion. Accordingly, no new matter has been added. The Examiner objected to Claim 11 as being dependant upon a rejected base claim; and as a result, new dependant Claim 85 has all the limitations of Claim 11, yet depends from new claim 84 (which is re-written Claim 10). The Examiner objected to Claim 7 as being dependant upon a rejected base claim (Claim 1), but stated that Claim 7 would be allowable if re-written in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims (Claim 6). New independent claim 86 has the same elements and structure as previously presented Claim 1, but in addition recites the limitations of original Claims 6 and 7, thus complying with Examiner's suggestion. Consequently Claims 84-86 are believed allowable.

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Reply To Office Action of JANUARY 11, 2005**Conclusion**

In view of the Remarks above, applicants respectfully submits that Claims 1, 3-51, 66-72, and 74-86 are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request prompt allowance of the claims. Applicants hereby authorize the Commissioner to charge the fees necessary in connection with this Response and any other fees necessary in connection with this application, to Deposit Account Number 02-1666.

Any questions concerning this application or amendment may be directed to the undersigned agent of applicants.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 

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